

The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives more news and editorial interpretation of matters affecting labor. It is published weekly, and contains information of local and national interest.

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WILLIAM GREEN, President

WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1943

GEORGE HEARTY, Secretary-Treasurer

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FACING THE FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

There was a time when the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor commanded respect. It was a time when its reports were eagerly awaited and its findings were authoritative. But nowadays the prestige of this Government agency is a mockery of the facts. And the tragic part of it is that the Government policy with regard to price control is based on such obviously inaccurate and unconfirmed reports.

For instance, the Bureau of Labor Statistics says that the cost of living is now only 4.5 per cent above what it was last September. The Office of Price Administration therefore jubilantly announced that if and when it reduces prices by 4.5 per cent, the cost of living will be brought back into equitable relationship with wages.

To our way of thinking, a great and hitherto undisclosed source of synthetic rubber can be found in statistics. Anyone familiar with handling them can make the figures stretch to cover any given situation. Even casual examination of the figures put out by the BLS and the OPA shows how shallow they are.

Market Figures

As the adage says, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating." We eat right here in the District of Columbia. We buy our food here. And we are paying for it, through the nose.

But the OPA talks to us that the cost of living has gone up only 5 per cent in the past year. We eat what it is that the Government agency is a mockery of the facts. And the tragic part of it is that the Government policy with regard to price control is based on such obviously inaccurate and unconfirmed reports.

Nothing but the figures put out by the BLS and the OPA shows how shallow they are. For instance, the Bureau of Labor Statistics says that the cost of living is now only 4.5 per cent above what it was last September. The Office of Price Administration therefore jubilantly announced that if and when it reduces prices by 4.5 per cent, the cost of living will be brought back into equitable relationship with wages.

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Bevin Invited to AFL Convention

Washington, D. C.—Ernest Bevin, British Minister of Labor, has been invited to attend and address the third annual convention of the American Federation of Labor which opens in Boston on October 1. It is expected that he will make every effort to arrange to do so.

As usual, President Roosevelt will send a personal message to the convention in lieu of a personal appearance which his war-time duties may prevent.

The American Government representative at the convention will be the Secretary of War, Henry Stimson, who will be accompanied by his highly regarded by organized labor.

Labor Meets The Test in Planning Post-War Jobs, Shiskin Declares

Washington, D. C.—The recently completed production and personnel of adequate planning for employment, job opportunities.

"Industrial reconversion calls for most of fighters and workers when they lay down their weapons and war tools and the importance of AFL plans in this field were emphasized in a statement by Boris Shiskin, AFL economist, representing the American Federation of Labor in the planning of a single reconversion plan which would be fully represented which could be used in the reconversion of the nation's industry.

Enforcement of Child Labor Laws Urged by Education Commission

Washington, D. C.—The rapid increase in child labor throughout the country because of the war has been declared to be a threat to the future of the nation at a meeting here of the National Commission for the Defense of Democracy. The commission, which is the most powerful of national organizations, has urged the most important work children can do is to be school work.

AFL Calls for Wide Political Action To Defeat Anti-Labor Candidates

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green issued a nation-wide call to all affiliated organizations to get busy all at once with plans for political action in this year's and next year's elections.

Mr. Green emphasized that many members of Congress and State Legislatures who voted for anti-labor measures will be candidates for reelection and should be defeated regardless of their political affiliations. "If we, therefore, abstained from this official communication calling upon all officers and members of the American Federation of Labor to prepare for the political campaign of this year and next year," he said, "we would be failing to do our duty."

British Strikes Exceed America's!

New York City—According to a cable dated this to the New York Times from London, strikes in war-torn Britain have exceeded those in the United States.

The London Times confounds the criticism of reactionaries in this country who have tried to draw unfavorable comparisons between labor's activities in the two countries.

AFL Asks Congress To Act Promptly On Repeal of Connally-Smith Act

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green formally requested the House Military Affairs Committee to repeal the Connally-Smith Act, which is a law that is a hindrance to the labor movement.

In a telegram to Andrew J. May, chief counsel of the House Committee, Mr. Green emphasized that the American Federation of Labor demands the prompt action on this measure.

Conditions Creating Labor Shortage Must Be Remedied, AFL Survey Says

Washington, D. C.—The way to adjust the manpower crisis is to remedy the major conditions responsible for the labor shortage, according to a survey made by the AFL.

The survey, which was conducted by the AFL's Bureau of Labor Statistics, found that the major conditions responsible for the labor shortage are:

News Briefs

UNIONS' COUNSEL LANDED WITH SALERNO INVADERS

Washington, D. C.—Among the first Americans to head with the invasion forces at Salerno, Italy, the Associated Press reported, was Union Counsel, A. Lane, formerly chief of the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers Union and other labor organizations.

AFL POLITICAL ACTION LAUDED BY GOV. OSBORN

Phoenix, Ariz.—Economic and political action taken by the American Federation of Labor to help the government in its war effort was lauded by Governor Osborn.

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK CALLED FOR OCT. 3-9

Washington, D. C.—The National Fire Protection Association has called for Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 3-9, with an average loss of fire in the United States of \$100,000,000 a year.

MARITIME UNIT PRAISES OREGON SHIPBUILDING CO.

Washington, D. C.—The Maritime Commission congratulated both the Maritime Union of America and the Oregon Shipbuilding Co. for their work in building ships for the war effort.

INTERNATIONAL LABOR PRESS MEETS OCT. 4

Springfield, Ill.—The annual meeting of the International Labor Press Association will be held at the Hotel Statler, Springfield, Ill., on October 4.

DONALD WAKEFIELD SMITH ACCUSED OF MAIL FRAUD

Washington, D. C.—Donald Wakefield Smith, a prominent labor leader, has been accused of mail fraud in connection with his work for the American Federation of Labor.

ILGWU HAS PURCHASED \$1,000,000 WAR BONDS

New York City.—The International Ladies Garment Workers Union has purchased \$1,000,000 in war bonds, according to a statement issued by the union.

\$350,000 WAR BONDS BOUGHT BY MUSICIANS

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Musicians (AFM) has purchased \$350,000 in war bonds, according to a statement issued by the union.

Labor Baiters Assailed As Fascists By Green Before American Legion

AFL Chief Warns Legion To Beware Advances From Big Business Interests

Omaha, Neb.—In a spirited address before the American Legion convention, AFL President William Green assailed labor baiters as fascists and warned the Legion to beware advances from powerful groups who wish to use the veterans' organization for "special and selfish economic interests."

Without pausing his punches, Mr. Green charged that representatives of the American Legion have at times been "fired by rash and unbusinesslike statements" concerning labor.

He defined the record made by "big business" pointing out that American workers during the war have been "baited" by the "big business" interests who are "baiting" the labor movement.

"To win the war and plan for the future means economic and political action," he said. "The labor movement, taking part in elections, must stand up to the big business interests in this state and nation who who have the philosophy and understanding of the war better than we do."

F. D. R. Praises Production Record

Washington, D. C.—Production achievements by American labor and industry were highly praised by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his message to Congress on September 17.

The President declared a long list of armaments production totals to show the progress of the war effort.

Labor League For Human Rights Plans Relief For Italian people

New York City.—As a practical demonstration to the Italian people, the Labor League for Human Rights, in the name of the American Federation of Labor, has announced that it will raise \$100,000 to help the Italian people.

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